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Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville MD 20852

RE: Docket #98N-1038
Irradiation in the Production, Processing and Handling of Food

I strongly urge the FDA to retain current labeling of irradiated foods. If I'm going to buy irradiated food, I want the package to state so clearly: 'treated with radiation' or 'treated by irradiation,' and I want to see the radura symbol on all irradiated foods. Since the FDA has previously concluded that irradiation is a 'material fact' about food processing, that fact should certainly continue to be disclosed. Some irradiated foods have different texture and spoilage characteristics than untreated foods. Most fruits and vegetables have nutrient losses that are not obvious or expected by the buyer. Irradiation causes chemical changes that are not evident and are potentially hazardous. Meat may have a higher level of carcinogenic benzene. All irradiated foods contain unique radiolytic products that have never been tested. Irradiation remains a new technology with no long-term human feeding studies. I want the label large enough to be readily visible and on the front of the package. While experienced consumers may become familiar with the radura, new consumers, such as young people and immigrants, will not be.

For all the above reasons (and probably more that no one has thought of), the FDA's present labeling requirement should not be permitted to expire.

Yours sincerely,



cc:Rep. Lloyd Doggett, Sen. Phil Gramm, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison

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